

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
DIA WASHDC
USNMR SHAPE BRUSSELS BEL
COMUSFORAZ
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1307

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT PO
SUBJECT: SOCIALISTS HELP THEMSELVES AND GOVERNMENT

SUMMARY: THE SOCIALISTS COUNTERACTED ATTACKS FROM THEIR
LEFT BY ADDING 31 LEADING MEMBERS OF THE "SOCIALIST
INTERVENTION," INCLUDING JORGE SAMPAIO AND JOAO CRAVINHO.
THE GOVERNMENT MOVED TO STRENGTHEN ITSELF BY NAMING
RESPECTED PS LEADER JAIME GAMA AS INTERIOR MINISTER.
END SUMMARY.

1. SOCIALISTS ADD KEY MEMBERS: "THE SOCIALIST
INTERVENTION" (IS) ANNOUNCED FEB 18 ITS DISBANDMENT
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AND THE INTEGRATION OF 31 LEADING IS FIGURES HEADED BY
HORGE SAMPAIO, JOAO CRAVINHO, JOSE MANUEL GALVAO TELES,
AND MIGUEL GALVAO TELES INTO THE SOCIALIST PARTY. THE
IS WAS FORMED IN NOVEMBER 1975 TO FILL AN ALLEGED GAP
BETWEEN THE PS AND PCP, BUT DESPITE ITS DISTINGUISHED
MEMBERSHIP, IS NEVER EXERCISED SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE.
PS LEADER JAIME GAMA TOLD EMBOFF FEB 20 THAT IS

INTEGRATION INTO THE PS HAS BEEN IN THE WORKS FOR OVER A MONTH, BUT THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS TIMED TO DISCREDIT THE ARGUMENTS OF THE COMMUNISTS AND OF LOPES CARDOSO THAT THE PS HAS MOVED TOO FAR TO THE RIGHT.

2. GAMA INTERIOR MINISTER: SOCIALIST PARTY DEPUTY JAIME GAMA HAS BEEN SELECTED TO REPLACE OLIVEIRA E SILVA AS INTERIOR MINISTER. GAMA, WHO WILL TAKE OFFICE LATER THIS WEEK, IS A 1977 LEADER GRANTEE, A CLOSE CONTACT OF THE EMBASSY, AND A SUPPORTER OF THE US. GAMA HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY ACTIVE IN DEFENSE AND FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES IN THE ASSEMBLY. HE SERVED AS PS SPOKESMAN AND CHIEF NEGOTIATOR DURING TALKS LEADING TO FORMATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT. GAMA, A 31-YEAR-OLD AZOREAN, IS RESPECTED BY PS AND OPPOSITION COLLEAGUES AND BY THE POLICE AND NATIONAL GUARD WHOM HE WILL SUPERVISE DIRECTLY. GAMA, DESPITE HIS YOUTH HAS PROVED COMPETENT IN A WIDE RANGE OF RESPONSIBILITIES; HIS SELECTION SEEMS AN EXCELLENT ONE.

3. COMMENT: THE IS HAD NO ELECTION STRENGTH. BUT THE INTEGRATION OF IS MEMBERS BRINGS THE SOCIALISTS GOOD TALENT WITH EXPERIENCE IN GOVERNMENT AND HELPS BALANCE PREVIOUS SOCIALIST LOSSES TO THEIR LEFT. JORGE SAMPAIO AND HIS ASSOCIATES' DECISION REINFORCES THE CONCLUSION THAT THERE IS NO SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL SPACE FOR A DEMOCRATIC PARTY TO THE LEFT OF THE SOCIALISTS.
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